

Message Text

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44

ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 PM-03 DODE-00

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 OMB-01 L-02 PRS-01 IO-03

EB-03 DRC-01 /063 W

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P 071001Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9976

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 6100

LIMDIS

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PDEV, KS, JA

SUBJECT: KIM TAE-CHUNG CASE: ROK-JAPAN RELATIONS

REF: SEOUL 6072

1. IN SEPTEMBER 7 DISCUSSION WITH AMBASSADOR FONMIN KIM DISCUSSED AT SOME LENGTH HIS SEPTEMBER 6 MEETING WITH JAPANESE AMBASSADOR USHIROKU (REFTEL). KIM'S DESCRIPTION OF MEETING ACCORDS CLOSELY WITH THAT REPORTED REFTEL. HOWEVER, IN ADDITION, KIM STATED THAT USHIROKU "THREATENED" THAT JAPANESE MIGHT CUT OFF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, BLOCK NORMAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES, AND SPOKE OF CASE AFFECTING JAPAN'S ABILITY TO ASSIST AT UN, IN EVENT ROKG REFUSESE TO MOVE TOWARD JAPANESE POSITION ON KIM TAE-CHUNG CASE. (WE DOUBT USHIROKU ACTUALLY MADE THREATS. WE DO SUSPECT USHIROKU MAY HAVE LISTED THESE AS POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES OF A LONG TERM CONFRONTATION ON THE KIM CASE.)

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2. KIM CLAIMED THAT HE WAS "VERY FIRM" WITH

USHIROKU AND WARNED HIM OF CONSEQUENCES FOR KOREA-JAPAN RELATIONS IF JAPANESE DO NOT SHOW A MORE UNDERSTANDING ATTITUDE. KIM TOLD USHIROKU THAT WITHIN ROKG CIRCLES THERE IS GROWING VIEW THAT JAPANESE IN FACT DELIBERATELY MAKING ISSUE OUT OF KIM CASE. (KIM AVERRED THAT IF GOJ WISHED TO THEY COULD TAKE MEASURES TO DAMPEN EMOTIONAL PRESS/POLITICAL REACTION IN JAPAN. AS IN CASE PRIMIN, KIM ALSO COMPLAINED BITTERLY THAT JAPANESE, IN VIOLATION PREVIOUS AGREEMENT, HAD INFORMED PRESS OF ALLEGATIONS RE KOREAN EMBASSY FIRST SECRETARY.)

3. AMBASSADOR TOLD KIM THAT WE DO NOT BELIEVE GOJ IS TRYING TO EMBARRASS ROKG OR USE KIM TAE-CHUNG CASE TO EXACERBATE RELATIONS WITH ROKG. AMBASSADOR SAID THAT ROKG MUST ACCEPT THAT GOJ BELIEVES IT HAS SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT VIEW THAT LOWER LEVEL ROK OFFICIALS WERE INVOLVED IN KIM KIDNAPPING. AT MINIMUM, ROKG SHOULD AT LEAST BE WILLING TO DISCUSS JAPANESE EVIDENCE.

4. MORE GENERALLY, AMBASSADOR STRESSED HIS CONCERN THAT KIM CASE SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO THREATEN LONGER TERM ROK-JAPAN RELATIONSHIPS. CONSEQUENTLY, IT IS NECESSARY FOR KOREAN SIDE, AS WELL AS JAPANESE SIDE, TO REALIZE THE NEED TO SEARCH FOR AN APPROPRIATE, PROPER AND EARLY RESOLUTION OF THE CASE.

5. COMMENT: IN DESCRIBING USHIROKY MEETING FONMIN KIM WAS VISIBLY AGITATED. IT IS CLEAR THAT HE, AS WELL AS OTHER SENIOR ROKG OFFICIALS, ARE PAINFULLY AWARE OF CORROSIVE EFFECT WHICH KIM CASE IS HAVING ON ROK-JAPAN RELATIONS. AT SAME TIME ROKG IS TRYING TO MAINTAIN THE FICTION OF NON-INVOLVEMENT IN THE KIM KIDNAPPING, DESPITE STRONG GOJ REACTIONS. WE DO NOT KNOW HOW LONG ROKG CAN HOLD TO THIS LINE, BUT FOR PRESENT, IT REMAINS THE ROKG POSITION.

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